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PARSIFAL, Act I.

The Meister.

VOL. I.

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No. 1.

CRUSSH!

THE WAGNER SOCIETY of London makes to-day its bow to the public, and begs to introduce its friend the "MEISTER." That gentleman must now say a few words for himself, or *themselves*; for the editorial "we" will but betoken the *impersonal* character of the undertaking, and therein be more consistent with the true facts of the case than when employed by journals carried on for the purpose of private gain.

"JAHOE A!"



O RUFT DER MERKER." So summons us the "Marker," the being who shall watch over our words and record our slips and our errors. But the *Meistersinger* gives us more gracious comfort, when it shows us the candidate for singer's honours taking up the cry "begin," and answering it at once in the words, "So called the Spring to the woods. The woods replied to the cry that gave them life, and took up quick the song of Spring." Thus shall we hope to echo the call that has summoned forth the first Wagnerian journal in London. We know full well that there will be not one but many a "Marker" lurking behind the curtained enclosure of professional criticism, ready to pounce down with his grating chalk upon every note that jars his prejudiced ears, and only too anxious to cover the black-board with ugly crosses, in witness of our sins against the canons of received and stereotyped conventionality. Yet we may hope to find, even among the serried ranks of theory-encased professors, perchance some kindly soul who will play for us the part of Hans Sachs, and say, "The Spring's command and sweet compulsion, they set it in his heart; and sang he as he *must*."

Nor will we be behind our hoped-for Hans Sachs, in proclaiming that the song is not our own. The Spring of a new era of Art, inaugurated by the great Master who passed away this day five years ago, has put it in our heart, and it must needs come forth; and, coming forth, it will but express itself in humble recognition of the regenerative life-force of the Spring of Richard Wagner's genius. So may we hope that one by one the glades of the forest will each in turn take up the sound, and at last each rustling avenue of stirring leaves will hymn the fact that the breath of spring has passed that way.

"The Art-work of the Future is only for those who are waking from the Dream of the Present. He who does not feel the trouble of this Dream so sharply that he must fain awaken, let him dream on! I work for those who are awaking."

R. WAGNER.

IN starting such a journal as this we may fairly be asked what are its aims. Our answer may be summed up in but few words: the endeavour to show to the English-speaking world the many aspects of the genius of the departed Master. This we hope to fulfil by reviews of his dramatic works regarded from both the poetical and the musical standpoint, by culling from his prose works some of the many pregnant thoughts therein expressed, and by presenting to our readers such portions of the ten volumes of those works as may be most susceptible of translation into our own tongue. Even were we to confine ourselves to the latter of these objects, we should find matter enough to fill this journal for years to come, and it is from this point of view that we may hope more markedly to open up what to most of our readers will be untrodden ground, in the wide realms of this man's great genius; for rarely have the creative and the critical faculties gone so completely hand in hand as in the case of Richard Wagner. Had he never composed one bar of music, and never conceived one scene of drama, his prose works alone would have ranked him amongst the foremost thinkers of the day.

The deeply-searching spirit of inquiry that led Kant and Schopenhauer into their profound investigations of the nature and essence of the manifested world, awoke in him the desire to probe the domains of art, and to get down beneath the surface of appearances, to the solid rock of its foundation in the universal feelings of mankind. Through art he sought his way to social problems of the deepest interest, and to the vital questions of religion and a higher world. Wherever the people had in old times laid up their precious hoards of wisdom, there found he rich

material for his thought; and, from each excursion into the dark forests of the ancient myths, came back, his brow bedecked with flowers glowing with the liveliest tints, his hands filled full of jewels whose neglected fires leapt into flames when kissed once more by the bright light of day.

The world of nowadays will not allow to one man that he shall excel in more than one pursuit, and, forgetful how a Leonardo da Vinci was at once consummate artist and erudite natural philosopher, it wills that the man of art shall be but as a child in other things. With most men it is right; but surely wrong when it would fain cut the wings of genius and mark out for it the circle of its flight. Thus has it fared with Richard Wagner. Had he not perplexed the world with his ideas on art, statecraft, and metaphysics, maybe his creative masterpieces would have found a readier ear, his music sounded to a friendlier welcome; had he not come before the world with harmonies brought down from loftier spheres, his earnest thoughts on man's affairs, his brilliant criticisms of art, would have met with warmer recognition. But, dazed with the spectacle of a mind that could at one time bring forth such a great critical analysis as his "*Oper und Drama*," and at another give birth to such a Titanic offspring as his "*Ring des Nibelungen*," his contemporaries would not mete out due meed to either.

The present generation is, however, beginning to awake to the fact that we have lost in Richard Wagner one of the most remarkable men the world has known; and the increasing numbers of foreigners, especially of English and Americans, who throng to the performances at Bayreuth show that he is, even outside the circle of his own nation, beginning to be appreciated in one aspect at least.

But few who sit and drink in with their ears the marvellous strains of *Tristan* or of *Parsifal* ever stay to question what deep thought lies underneath the vesture of the poems. The tendency is far too great to consider these dramas in the light of an ordinary opera text-book, with perhaps the frivolity left out. Yet

excellent translations of all of Wagner's poems may be had, and study of them would reveal that it was no mere planner of effective plots that wrote the originals. And, for the very reason of the little thought that is bestowed upon the profound character of these works, we deem it necessary to show our own public that Richard Wagner was not *only* a musician; and that, though the highest in that class, he was still something beside that. We do not attempt to say whether he was higher as musician, as poet, or as philosopher, but beg a fair hearing for him in each capacity, and therefore, though we propose to collect in this journal all current information as to dates of representation of his musical works and other topics of interest in relation thereto, we think that it will be of most service to translate and publish certain portions of his prose works. As a first instalment we now offer a letter of Richard Wagner to Berlioz, which will explain in his own words the origin of the mock-title "Music of the Future," with which his works have been branded, and with this we must close our prologue :—

[*Translation.*]

"PARIS, *Feb.* 1860.

"DEAR BERLIOZ,

"When, five years ago in London, a common fate brought you and me into more intimate communion, I boasted of having the advantage over you that I was in the position to understand and appreciate your works, whereas my own must, in one essential particular, remain foreign and unknowable for you. I was then thinking chiefly of the instrumental character of your works, and—taught by experience how completely an orchestral piece may under favourable conditions be rendered, while dramatic music as soon as it steps beyond the conventional bounds of the essentially frivolous *genre* of Opera can at the best be but dimly shadowed forth by our opera companies—I had almost left out of sight the chief obstacle in the way of your comprehension of my aims, to wit, your ignorance of the German tongue ;

with which tongue, however, my dramatic conceptions are so intimately bound up. My lot compels me now to forsake this coign of vantage.

"For eleven years have I been shut out from all possibility of witnessing my own works, and I shudder at the prospect of remaining any longer perhaps the only German who has not heard my 'Lohengrin.' It is, therefore, neither ambition nor desire of advertisement that leads me on to the attempt to win the hospitality of France for my dramatic works. I only wish, by means of good translations, to make their representation possible in this country, and, should any one have compassion on the strange fate of an author who by such a circuitous path is painfully striving himself to hear his own creations, then may I dare to hope one day to make myself completely known likewise to you, dear Berlioz.

"But, through your last article, which deals with my late concerts, and which contains so much that is flattering to and appreciative of me, you have given me another opening of which I will at once take advantage, in order briefly to throw light, both for you and the public, upon this wonderful question which you have so earnestly raised, namely that of a '*Musique de l'avenir*.' Considering that even you seem to imagine that we have here to deal with a 'school' which arrogates to itself that title and of which I am the Master, I perceive that you also belong to those who really believe that somewhere and at some time or other I have allowed myself to set up certain *Theses* which you divide into two categories, to the first of which as being for long time past of recognised validity, you declare yourself most ready to assent, but against the second you feel obliged to protest as utter nonsense. You do not, however, express yourself very clearly as to whether you credit me with only the empty folly of giving out old goods as new, or with the insane endeavour to make out a case for what has no sense whatever in it; and I cannot but believe that it will be a gratification to your feeling of friendship towards me that this doubt should at once be cleared up. Learn,

then, that the term 'Music of the Future' owes its parentage not to me but to a German musical critic, Professor Bischoff, of Cologne, a friend of Ferdinand Hiller, who again will be known to you as a friend of Rossini. The pretext for the invention of that ridiculous phrase he appears to have found in an intentional misinterpretation of one of my prose works, which ten years ago I published under the title of 'The Art-work of the Future.' I wrote this essay at a time when crushing accidents of fortune had held me long aloof from the exercise of my art, and when, after countless and varied experiences, my mind girt itself up for a more thorough investigation into problems of life and of art which had up till then been to me as unread riddles. I had lived through the Revolution, and seen with what sceptical contempt our public art and its institutions were treated by it, so that a complete victory for the social revolution appeared to involve the utter ruin of those institutions. I searched for the reasons of this contempt, and to my surprise was forced to almost the same conclusions which have determined yourself, my dear Berlioz, on every opportunity, to pour out disgust and bitterness upon the spirit of such art-institutes; namely the recognition that such bodies, especially the theatre, and most markedly the opera, are following, in their relations with the public, tendencies which have not one jot of kinship with those of true art and of worthy artists, but merely put on a cloak of good pretence so as the better to minister to the frivolous taste of the public in our large cities. I further asked myself, what must be the position of art towards the public in order that it should inspire the latter with a reverence that could not be profaned; and, so as not merely to build up for myself castles in the air, I took my stand upon the ground which art once occupied in the face of the public life of the Greeks.

"Here I lit forthwith upon that art-work which must throughout the ages rank as the most complete; I mean the Drama, for herein the highest and the deepest artistic purpose finds the clearest and the most universally comprehensible exposition. As

even to-day we stand in amaze before the thought that once the Greeks in their thirty thousand could witness with deepest interest the representation of tragedies such as those of *Æschylus*, I also tried to discover what were the means by which so extraordinary a result was brought about: I found that they lay in the union of all arts in the one true giant masterpiece. This brought me to the search for the relationship of the separate branches of art to one another, and as soon as I had proved for myself that of the plastic art to the actually enacted Drama, I peered closer into the connexion between music and poetry; and here found explanations which brought into the full light of day much which by its uncertainty had heretofore disturbed me. For I saw that, exactly at the line where the boundaries of one domain of art erect an insuperable barrier, there begins with the clearest definition the potency of some other art; that therefore, by the intimate blending of both arts, that which in each alone is inexpressible finds expression of the utmost distinctness; whereas every attempt to express by one form of art what is only possible by their conjunction, must lead to monstrosity and to the ruin of even the form selected.

"Thus my aim was to point out the possibility of art-work in which the very Highest and the most Profound that the human spirit can grasp should, in the most easily comprehensible manner, be offered to the most simple perceptive faculties of purely human emotion, and this so sharply and so convincingly that there should be no need of reflective criticism for its clear understanding. Such work I called 'The Art-work of the Future.'

"Consider, then, my dear *Berlioz*, with what feelings, after ten years of contumely from the pens of obscure critics, of half or wholly idiotic wit-mongers, and from the chatter of the dull, parrot-like masses, I must see even so earnest a man, so eminently-gifted an artist, so brilliant a critic, and so valued a friend cast in my face this most bizarre of all misunderstandings of an idea which, even if erroneous, was deep in its inquiries, and drag up once more the phrase, 'Music of the Future'; and that upon

grounds which, were I really guilty of the opinions with which I am credited, would rank me as one of the most ridiculous of men. Believe me, however, though my book must still remain unknown to you, that therein is not one word about music under its grammatical aspect, and whether one ought to write sense or nonsense in it. Considering the magnitude of the undertaking, and that I am not a tone-theorist by profession, this I of necessity left to others. For my own part, I heartily regret that I ever published my ideas upon this subject; for, when the artist is understood with such difficulty even by artists,—when even the educated critic is often so closely entangled in the meshes of the prejudice of the dilettantists that in the representation of a work of art he hears and sees things that are actually non-existent, and does not discover its very essentials,—how shall the art-philosopher be otherwise conceived of by the public than in like manner as my essay was interpreted by Professor Bischoff of Cologne? But more than enough of this. I have now made away with my last advantage over you, in showing you the meaning of the phrase, 'Music of the Future.' Let us now hope for the time when we two, as artists each alike favoured by fortune, can reciprocally commune one with the other. Grant me an asylum for my dramas on France's hospitable soil, and believe in the heartfelt longing with which I look forward to the first performance of your 'Trojans,' and hope for its success.

"R. WAGNER."

It was in the Parisian *Presse Théâtrale*, of February 26, 1860, that appeared the above manly and temperate reply to an article by his former comrade, which had been published in the *Journal des Débats*, and in which Berlioz had endeavoured by a *démenti* of the theories advanced by Wagner to shake himself free from the imputation of belonging to this "new school." The public, however, was not to be calmed by this casting out of Jonah; for Berlioz's "Trojans" was, immediately on its production, classed in the same *genre* as Richard Wagner's operas, and met a like fate. What are *now* the relative positions of that work and of "Tannhäuser"?

WAGNER AMONG THE COMPOSERS.



THE following colloquy between two musicians is reported by a German paper to have taken place :—

A.—“ You are a Wagnerite, of course ? ”

B.—“ No ! pardon me, I am a composer myself.”

How characteristic and true to facts is this anecdote !

It might well serve as the text or motto of an exhaustive essay on the attitude of contemporary composers towards Wagner. But *cui bono* ? The investigation which such an essay would involve, would tend to prove that—though at the outset of his career Wagner received some active support from Spohr (who was one of the first to bring “ Der Fliegende Holländer ” to a hearing), and some recognition of his extraordinary attainments, so far as they were made apparent in “ Tannhäuser,” from Schumann and others—when he became dangerous as a rival, he was almost universally tabooed and maligned by his brother composers and their critical friends. As a bright and glorious exception, Franz Liszt—who, from first to last, stood by him as his best and most devoted friend, and of whom Wagner (in one of his recently published letters) has aptly spoken as, like Jesus on the Cross, ever ready to help all others but himself—stands out almost alone. If this was true in Wagner’s lifetime, it is equally so at the present. In confirmation of this assertion, it is only necessary to look through the published lists of the members of the *Allgemeiner Richard Wagner Verein*, and its different branches, and it will be found that the names of present-day composers of note are too generally conspicuous by their absence. To mention names would be invidious. *Verbum sap.*

C. A. BARRY.

RICHARD WAGNER AND THE "BAYREUTHER BLATTET."

*Translated from an original article contributed by C. F. GLASENAPP,
of RIGA, author of "Richard Wagner's 'Leben und Wirken.'"*

"Let us stand ever on the mountain-top,
To gain the clearest view and deepest insight."

R. WAGNER.

IN 1855 RICHARD WAGNER came to London, in answer to an invitation from the Philharmonic Society. He conducted the eight concerts of the season, and left England after a stay of nearly four months. We must view this engagement in no other light than that of a wonderful freak of chance; for the reason that prompted it was certainly not a true perception of his artistic aims, and no important consequence ensued therefrom either for Wagner or for London. When Wagner's English admirers, twenty years later, set their full force in motion in the furtherance of his enterprise at Bayreuth, they were obliged to commence with the very beginning, in order to gain the ear of the English public for his purpose and his works.

During the above-mentioned London episode, certain English journals had shown an endeavour, among other things, to acquaint their readers with the ideas of the artist concerning his art, and this by means of more or less lengthy extracts from his theoretical writings; of course, in an inimical sense. Wagner's first essays upon Art had just appeared; I mean *Kunst und Revolution* (Art and Revolution), *Das Kunstwerk der Zukunft* (The Art-work of the Future), and the great tripartite monograph, *Oper und Drama* (Opera and Drama). Their fate in Germany is soon told: the German professors thrust them aside as mere curiosities; the

German artists, under the leadership of Franz Liszt, elevated them to the rank of the programme of a musical sect; the German critics extracted from them the distorted idea of a "Music of the Future" (*Zukunftsmusik*), and gave of their other contents but mangled fragments at the best. If any one wishes to verify this statement by proofs, let him proceed to the Viennese Wagner-Museum, and, without going any further than the year 1854, take up the journal *Gartenlaube*, then at the height of its popularity; he will there see how a disfigured portrait is united with a disfiguring text, and certain quotations strung together without rhyme or reason; the whole welded, in a manner of speaking, into a harmonious whole and given forth to the German people as an accurate presentment of their greatest artist.

The English critic, also, desired nothing better than a refutation of a system entirely new and strange to him; but he considered it becoming to first set before his public the words and thoughts of Wagner in a connected and literal translation, and to let them speak for themselves, ere he proceeded to attack them. The Meister himself was surprised by this. For, as conductor and composer, he was conscious that he had won in those concerts not only recognition, but even a certain amount of enthusiasm; though he had never counted on any comprehension of his art-theories in England. "The Germans are more in a position to understand my writings, and *their anxiety is lest they should be universally understood*. The English critic, however, feels that the English musical public could not possibly understand me, and he therefore behaves very cunningly when he offers me as a victim to this general misunderstanding": thus, perchance, did he account for the method of his English critics and opponents, so unaccustomed in its circumstantiality of details after his experiences in Germany.

Perhaps we may to-day accept this English thoroughness of the former days as a more favourable omen for a further understanding of Richard Wagner's ideas. For it still remains a fact that these same *ideas* as such demand a more full consideration.

They are a Spiritual Power with which one must reckon. Lay them on one side: they change not, but there they stand and wait till you seek them out! It may be that the time has come for this to England too. In this wise did folk once put out of sight the *music* of Wagner and the art-work of Bayreuth; it only came thereby the more laboriously *to life*. But now it stands erect, and far afield shines the mysterious shimmer of the Gral, illuminating the whole of the German Empire. Meanwhile the rich world of thought that greeted the day from Wagner's first writings has built itself up and enriched itself with the gains of a life of struggle and of change, has grown in depth and inwardness, and widened and fortified its confines.

Instead of the three or four important writings of the beginning of the period 1850-60, we have now before us a set of ten volumes of collected writings of the Artist-Sage of Bayreuth; a "Wagner-Lexicon" of a compass of nearly 1,000 pages offers us, in a systematic ordering of the "central ideas of Wagner upon Art and Philosophy," a ready assistance in their study; a special organ—the *Bayreuther Blätter*—commenced in the lifetime of the Meister, has been established with the object of offering a continuous and progressive expression of those ideas of Art and Philosophy; and a promising generation of followers of the Master is educating itself thereby for their task. Beside the highly-gifted leader of this troop—Freiherr Hans von Wolzogen—I must here make special mention, amongst his fellow-workers, of Heinrich von Stein, whose work can never be forgotten, and whose sudden death cut short a career of grand possibilities ere they were scarcely begun. Undoubtedly, after the art-work of Bayreuth, this following has done more for the propagation of the real Wagnerian "geist" (spirit) than the feeble attempt to found a Wagnerian (or new-German) school by training up young German composers in fruitless wrestlings with the outer aspects of the style of composition of Richard Wagner,—a style only half understood by them, and too masterful for them to deal with. As to where we are to look for the true "school" of Richard

Wagner, there can no longer be a shadow of a doubt. Not in the scores of "New-German" composers, but in the theatre on the Bayreuth hill, within whose walls the creative spirit of the Meister is still working with undiminished power in each performer and each singer, by the hallowed nature of the surroundings; where the first examples of artistically-finished performances were given by himself as models of *style*. "Only by Exemplars, Exemplars, and again Exemplars, can anything be taught or learnt." Such was the confession of the artist who gave up the whole life-force of his last years to the realisation of such exemplars; and the place where he stood beside the performers, giving them his personal instructions even to the minutest details, has long since become, by the force of reverend tradition, the unique artistic *school* of Bayreuth. Yet we must not overlook the careful, sympathetic training which Wagner gave in the final period of his life to his other "school," that of the young men whose united aim was to spread the knowledge of his ideas on art; to work out these ideas and carry them into effect; to clear away all misunderstanding of them; and to apply them to current and historical events. In the midst of them he held aloft again a living sampler, whereof the tenth volume of his "collected writings" gives clearest evidence, inasmuch as it is compiled almost exclusively from the artist's works of this description which had made their first appearance in the *Bayreuther Blätter*; among others I may cite their head and forefront, the article upon "Religion and Art," and its appendices.*

The impulse that moved Richard Wagner to such an undertaking must not be regarded as a mere whim or caprice, nor as an irresistible desire to say something, no matter what. The same fiery spirit whose earnestness arouses our wonder in his artistic creations could not but work *in earnest* in its untiring desire for a literary form of communication, whose utterances we

* We hope in a later number to translate portions of this remarkable essay.—Ed.

see ever advancing *pari passu* with his works of art. Rather it was a mighty necessity that compelled him to the task. He saw that even his highest artistic achievement, the hard-won art-festival of 1876, the representation of the "Ring des Nibelungen," was wondered at and admired by the great mass of the audience and chorus-singers, but *not understood*. "Its only success, as far as I can see at present, is that many an *individual* has been moved, by the impressions it has produced, to search a little more deeply into the *tendencies* of that event." In this sense it is most significant that the Meister declared, in this connexion, when he founded the *Bayreuther Blätter*, that, subsidiary to the great achievement of Bayreuth which now stood forth before the eyes of all, the discussion of its more remote influences was not superfluous, but rather would open up many an important line of investigation. This is well worth our while to grasp and to appreciate. People have learned at last, though late, to take the *writer*, Wagner, in earnest; just as they long delayed to recognise the poet and dramatist, Wagner, in all his true measure of greatness, fruitlessly refusing to regard him in any other light than that of musician and composer.

The same delay of public judgment is still apparent in Germany with regard to the position of the *Bayreuther Blätter*. However, we have to look upon that journal as an inheritance in trust, as a legacy of his genius, and as the solitary "mountain-top," or rather the path leading thereto, from which we may gain "a clear prospect and a deep insight." That which has already taken deep root in it, and has been often characterised as the "Regenerative Idea," is nothing more nor less than the insatiable desire to create for the accomplished aim of Richard Wagner's life, and for the perpetual realisation of his artistic ideal as we see it in the Festspielhaus (the Bayreuth Wagner-Theatre), a publicity worthy of itself, and a new *public* of a kind far different from our modern Theatre-public, and which must have itself learned to be in a true and worthy sense "receptive" before it can understand what Goethe meant when he admonished it "sich

produktiv zu verhalten" * (to exert a *proactive* influence on the artist).

Between the spirit of the *Bayreuther Blätter*,—which is none other than that of the spirit of Richard Wagner's writings, as whose fulfilment it must to a certain extent be regarded,—and the spirit of our modern reading-world there is, therefore, a gulf to bridge; and in its gradual spanning true and loyal thinkers are wisely employed. It is a matter of no less moment than a complete revolution of our whole modern culture; and the most resolute upholder of this culture should not stand aside from this work, even should he take up merely the position of an attentive onlooker. Were these ideas, on the other hand, taken up at once and received with universal acclamation in the same Germany that delayed so long to follow the soaring flight of its greatest artist, and even now is inclined to stray away at every moment from the grand simplicity of the Bayreuth ideal,—when, for instance, this or that literary free-lance is clamouring in hot haste for the superseding of the Bayreuth Festspielhaus by a "Wagner-Theatre" of similar construction in Berlin or elsewhere,—were this to happen, we should at least be justified in doubting of their earnestness and their depth. Let us first ask, "What is this gulf of separation?" and "Whither will this procees of reorganisation lead us?"

In our endeavour to measure the relationship existing between the "productive" artist and his contemporaries, let us hear once for all how Wagner distinguishes decisively between the two. "Either," says he, "the public and the artist are in harmony with each other, or they are not. In the latter case, the scientific-historical school will always lay the blame on the artist and declare him to be an unaccommodating being." We here find a "scientific-historical school" referred to, and ask ourselves what special tendency of our modern culture is denoted thereby, and to what other kind of school it may stand in opposition. The answer to the query must be all the more difficult, as we

* That is to say, in a spirit of sympathetic response.—ED.

find ourselves completely hemmed in by this former school, and thus, surrounded by this homogeneous atmosphere, do not perceive the undulations of any current different from itself. It is the same dissecting and analysing, experimenting and computing, intellectual method of modern science which we find employed, not alone upon the inanimate appearances of nature, but also upon the living facts of history. Against the piecemeal way in which we pulverise Nature, Goethe protested unceasingly that there *must* be another manner of dealing with her; not dismembering her members and presenting them one by one, but displaying her own active life, in the ceaseless interaction of the whole and its parts. His own labours in the domain of natural science are the best example of this better way. He came forth victor from a great combat, when, in 1830, the dispute between Cuvier and St. Hilaire, in the French Academy, promised to rescue the synthetic mode of treating nature from the stigma of reaction. We see the same spirit in Richard Wagner, when he said, "What does the student of Nature see through the microscope but that which it is of no value to him to understand?" and "Chemistry drags facts to light against which we have nothing to say,—yet which say nothing to us." In correspondence with this, in the domain of History, are the attempts at the explanation of world-famed occurrences, and of genius, "on various bases, even though some as yet are undiscovered," yet which for the most part are ascribed to "faults of temperament, one-sided energy, and obstinacy." In the like sense, Wagner, in his last essay, addressed to Heinrich von Stein, appeals to us for a true use of our powers of observation—"Have ye no eyes? Have ye no eyes?"—and points to the example of those who, when one shows them the portraits of Wallenstein and Gustav Adolph, indicate the one as the ambuscading intriguer, the other as the free hero. In vain may we console ourselves by saying that such a method of perception is a matter of genius, and not to be attained by any education. But still it may be hindered in its infancy, and made impossible by one style of education. It is that sort of culture which sets the

parts above the whole, and in the selfsame way drags the manifestations of Nature, of History and of Art from their setting, and plucks them into pieces. The complete spiritual isolation of the truly-gifted individual is the natural consequence of such a method of investigation; we lack the organs of perception, strive as we may to gain them by the aid of the "Scientific-Historical School."

No less is the complete accordance of the hero, the sage, and the artistic genius with the inmost heart and being of his nation made unrecognisable by this view. The same "scientific-historical" method, which is in such a hurry to prove every prominent individual to be merely the product of his surroundings in Time and Space, and thus of the historical period of Evolution in the which he is cast, gives us no clue to a knowledge of the real harmonious relation in which the sudden appearances of intellectual giants stand to one another and to the inner spirit of their people. Conversely it sees in the Jew of to-day, not the booty-loving Son of the Desert, who has preserved his character unchanged through thousands of years, but the modern citizen of the Mosaic confession. The racial idea is for it an abstraction, no living and realisable perception. Perchance these instances may suffice to show how over all, and in every domain of science, is working the same noxious influence of a method of inquiry which we are so loud in proclaiming as a grand result of the critical spirit of our century. It has its Achilles-heel, and its weakest point is ever, in the most unmistakable manner, presented to the highest and most pregnant questions of life.

It is not without intention, then, that I hold up the *Bayreuther Blätter* as the only journal in Germany, or even in Europe, which, in loyal following of the Meister's lead, sets up, in opposition to that critically-destructive form of culture, the method of artistic comprehension, and in this sense keeps its eye steadfast upon the unworthiness of modern art no less than on the seeds and blossoms of the worthier things to come. The paths of a great many-sidedness are pointed out, and also the goal. A true hand, and one firm in its grip, has already guided

the rudder of the little ship through many a tempest and many a calm, and never yet found itself in lack of a crew.

We consider the moment at which the London Branch of the "Wagner-Verein" (Wagner Society) has founded a special organ in the English tongue as peculiarly appropriate wherein to indicate the wide-reaching significance of the *Bayreuther Blätter* as set out above. Whosoever in England has a lively interest in the cause of Richard Wagner, cannot be indifferent to the obstacles whose continuance during the whole life of the Meister have called aloud, during the past twenty years, to our brothers across the Channel, for removal; nor to the present efforts of those who, on the ancestral German soil, have set before them as their goal the victory over the intellectual forces that have made so hard the task of clearing away the hindrances to the life-work of Richard Wagner, and the education of a new and better generation. So willed the Meister. In this endeavour they feel themselves at one, not only with the great minds of their own past, but also with those English thinkers who, like the great Thomas Carlyle, recognised the bond of union with the master-minds of Germany; and, as the English discovered to the Germans the genius of Arthur Schopenhauer, whose philosophy was either forgotten or completely neglected in his own fatherland, so is there open to our English comrades a wide possibility, in the assimilation of the culture-creating thoughts of Richard Wagner, and in their future elaboration. Perhaps, even, we ought ourselves to take as a favourable presage the first halting attempts, mentioned in the commencement of this article, to take up some definite position towards the ideas of the German artist, and which surprised even the Master himself by their penetration. Undoubtedly, the exceeding merit of those translations which have in later times appeared in England, of parts of the writings and poems of Richard Wagner, justifies us in this hope. May the journal of the English Wagner Society have the good fortune to publish many such valuable works, and thus carry a true faith in the *Ideal* into ever widening circles!

THE WORLD'S FAREWELL TO RICHARD WAGNER.

FAREWELL, Great Spirit! Thou by whom alone,
 Of all the Wonder-doers sent to be
 My signs and sureties Time-ward, unto me
 My inmost self has ceased to be unknown!
 Others have been as glasses where was shown
 The fashion of my face, or where to scan
 The secrets of my utmost offspring—Man—
 And learn to what his worth or shame had grown.
 The worship of their names has filled the sky,
 Their thunder has been heard, their lightning seen,
 Yet after-suns have rolled themselves on high
 And still have found me with unaltered mien;
 Thou only hast so dealt with me, that I
 Can be no more as if thou hadst not been.

ALFRED FORMAN.

"Search for the secret of realities in *Ideality*, and not the contrary. A religious dogma can take in the whole manifested world in its embrace; but let no man attempt to explain religion by the manifested world.—

"The affinities of religion and art begin where religion itself is no longer artificial. When science is needed for its comprehension, art can give no help.—

"What has not science cast aside as out of date! Yet see the masterpieces of art; change and cultivate your intellectual methods and your science as ye will,—there stands Shakespeare, there Goethe's "Faust," there the symphonies of Beethoven, and work as an eternal force."

R. WAGNER.

WAGNER AS DESCRIBED BY HIMSELF.



HE recently-published correspondence between Wagner and Liszt gives one a deeper insight into the character of the Master than could be got from any biography or any description of him given either by friend or by foe. Why are the letters of Mozart, Mendelssohn, Schumann and Berlioz so attractive? Because they bring us nearer to the men. They talk naturally about themselves, and their real thoughts come out at times in full; though dead, they yet speak. The Wagner-Liszt letters are, however, peculiarly fitted to show us the real Wagner, for he had a friend to whom he was always communicating now his troubles and despair, now his plans and his hopes, and that friend was never tired of expressing his sympathy, of giving advice—and material help, too—and of doing all that lay in his power to encourage the composer to work on amidst all difficulties. So throughout the correspondence Wagner is the principal theme; all other matters are of secondary importance. Liszt himself, in one of his letters, after writing about some of his own compositions, says: "But these are secondary matters (*Nebensache*); let me speak about thee." A pleasant task it would be to tell the tale of the struggling artist and of the faithful friend; but, for the moment, I propose only to call attention to some passages in the first volume which specially show that Wagner was patient, and, in the true sense of the word, humble; that he had that confidence in himself which all great men feel, and most, in one way or another, express; and that he was always trying to rise higher, and to live not for glory, not for gain, but for art as he understood it. The letters are genuine; of that I think there can be no question. Wagner and Liszt did not write them with a view to publication. They

are the natural outpourings of one friend to another ; from no motives of prudence did the two men conceal any part of their thoughts ; and from no strong desire to persuade and proselytise were they tempted to exaggerate their feelings or magnify their aims. If, then, it can be shown that Wagner,—whatever his failings and faults as a man,—felt, thought, and spoke like a great genius, it ought to persuade those who do not sympathise with his aims to study his works more earnestly ; at any rate, it ought to put an end to all silly talk about his pride, his jealousy, and his worldliness.

Without patience he would have not gone far. As early as 1841, in the first letter which he addressed to Liszt, he speaks of "my eternally unlucky star," and the fates continued unpropitious for a long time after that. In 1849, when preparations were being made for the production of his "*Lohengrin*," at Weimar, he wrote to Ziegeler, the intendant, to say that, on account of the want of earnestness in all matters pertaining to the theatre, and of the mere seeking after amusement, he did not think it a time when he might expect sympathy for his work. He was prepared to labour and to wait. Again, in 1851, Breitkopf und Härtel offered, to clear off an old debt, to publish the full and the vocal score of "*Lohengrin*." At that time he was working at a new opera—"Siegfried's Tod." He writes to Liszt that he feels inclined to let the vocal score be done, but to try and get the firm to promise to publish the full score of his new work, when finished, in place of the "*Lohengrin*." He was more interested in his "new child," which he announced was to be "stronger and sounder than the former"; and so he was willing to give up this definite offer.

And once again he showed unexampled patience in the matter of this same "new child." Liszt had produced "*Lohengrin*" with a certain amount of success at Weimar, and Wagner was composing "*Siegfried's Tod*" specially for that place. But while he was at work his scheme grew larger. In 1851 he writes to Liszt that he cannot carry out his promise, as he finds that "*Siegfried's Tod*" must form part of a series of dramas which

must be given at some great festival specially arranged for this purpose. The whole plan of the "*Ring des Nibelungen*" had come into his mind, and he gave up an immediate chance of success, for a scheme the realisation of which, at that time, seemed almost hopeless.

And now a word or two about his humility. In 1841 he speaks of himself as "a poor German opera-composer, who has had enough to do all through his life to try and spread his works a little beyond the borders of his province, and who is far too weak to be of importance for anything in the world." Ten years later he acknowledges that in his art-strivings he has much erred, and describes himself as an earthworm, arriving through error to a knowledge of the truth. And two years after that he writes: "Certainly my faculties, taken singly, are not great. I am and can only produce something when I summon together all my powers, and recklessly consume myself and them in so doing."

And he was patient, because he had confidence in himself. From Paris, in 1849, he writes that he wishes to work out something new, and that, he adds, "I can only do by myself." These were not the words of boasting and of ignorance. He knew the works of his great predecessors, especially Beethoven and Weber, and he had had some experience as a composer. When Liszt wrote to him expressing his admiration for the score of "*Lohengrin*," yet fearing its too ideal character might prove too much for the general public, Wagner replies: "I have shared your fears as to the satisfactory working of this opera on the stage; yet I think, if the performance quite answers to my wish, the work—and even the finale—will succeed. It is worth trying." In a letter from Zurich, written in 1849, speaking of his difficulties and worries, he cries out bitterly, "Is my finished work, '*Lohengrin*,' worth nothing? Is the opera, '*Siegfried's Tod*,' which I am longing to finish, worth nothing? Any how, to the present generation they appear mere luxuries." (By way of digression we may notice his confidence in others: the passage will have particular interest

for members of the London branch of the Wagner Society. "I think," writes Wagner to Liszt, about 1850, "of getting 'Lohengrin'—as you once suggested—translated into English, so as to get it performed in London. I have no fear as to its being misunderstood by the English.")

When Liszt produced "*Lohengrin*," Wagner was an exile at Zurich. The former was devoted heart and soul to the work—or, to use one of Liszt's own expressions, was all fire and flame for it—and he was doing everything he possibly could to ensure an artistic success. When Wagner first sent the score to Liszt he was all eagerness to have his friend's opinion of the opera. One might expect that he would be anxious to know the effect produced at rehearsal, to learn whether any cuts or alterations might be found advisable; for he would have been asking it of a man whose respect and admiration for him were boundless. Yet this is the spirit in which he addresses his zealous friend: "I have made my music in such plastic keeping with the poetry and action, that I think I may be perfectly sure of my affair. Trust in me, and do not think I am foolishly in love with my own works. If, on account of difficulties, you should feel that cuts ought to be made, I beg you to consider whether it would not be preferable to abandon the enterprise." Liszt's answer to this appeal was characteristic. "It goes without saying that we shall not strike out one note or one iota of thy work; but, so far as we are able, present it in its pure beauty." In a later letter referring to cuts—from which we infer that some request of the kind had been made to him—Wagner says: "Cut my opera, and you will destroy its meaning. To give way to the enemy is not to conquer: the enemy must capitulate." He speaks, too, of the "sound organism" of "*Lohengrin*," and declares that if this be destroyed he will take no further interest in the performances. Yet, as remarked, he had not heard a note of the opera. When, in 1853, he heard excerpts from "*Lohengrin*" at a festival at Zurich, he was able to write to Liszt: "I entirely share your preference for '*Lohengrin*;' it is the best thing I have done hitherto."

The last point we have to notice is Wagner's aspiration, his desire to unfold to the full all that lay within him, and thus to look ever forward. In 1849 Liszt proposed to him to re-construct his "Rienzi" so as to give it a chance of success in Paris. But Wagner answers, "I have no heart for the re-construction of a work which I have outlived . . . with my whole heart I wish to do something new." He had new ideas, new aims, and he could not throw himself into the past. In another letter to Liszt he thus unfolds his views on art: "I have felt the pulse of modern art, and know that it must die." He believes in a new art, and that he will assist at its birth. "No more cleaving and clinging to the past," he exclaims. "Let the past be past; the future, future; and let us work in the present." Whether his ideas were right, or whether he successfully carried them out has been questioned; but at least these are bold and striking words. Wagner, annoyed at the purely musical impression produced by "Lohengrin" on a friend, very neatly defines, in a letter, the position which music ought to occupy in his scheme. He reminds Liszt "that it is a means, not an end. The end in an intelligent opera is the Drama, and this is most decidedly in the hands of the actors on the stage." And again, "Every bar of dramatic music has only a *raison-d'être* in so far as it expresses the character of the action."

It has been my purpose in this first number of the MEISTER to describe Wagner's character, but it may be said in conclusion that Liszt's penetration, enthusiasm, generosity, and his finished style of writing well deserve a chapter to themselves.

J. S. SHEDLOCK, B.A.

(To be continued.)

SCHOPENHAUER'S "DIE WELT ALS WILLE UND VORSTELLUNG."

"Mother of this unfathomable world !
Favour my solemn song, for I have loved
Thee ever, and thee only ; I have watched
Thy shadow, and the darkness of thy steps,
And my heart ever gazes on the depth
Of thy deep mysteries."

SHELLEY'S "Alastor."

"**I**T is much easier to point out the faults and errors in the work of a great mind than to give a distinct and full exposition of its value."* With an acute sense of the truth of this remark, and the difficulty of the task before me, I propose, in a series of essays, of which this article is the precursor, to offer a few notes upon, rather than an elaborate analysis of, Schopenhauer's *opus maximum*, "Die Welt als Wille und Vorstellung." These notes will bear relation more particularly to the æsthetic portion of Schopenhauer's contribution to original thought—which, especially the "Metaphysics of Music"—exercised so powerful and direct an influence upon the later manifestations of the genius of Richard Wagner.†

* "The World as Will and Idea," vol. ii. p. 3. By Arthur Schopenhauer. Translated from the German by R. B. Haldane, M.A., and John Kemp, M.A. Trübner & Co.

† That Wagner was no slavish follower in the train of the thoughts of another is manifest in all his writings ; but it is important to emphasise the fact that not till the poem of the "Nibelungen" was completed did he become acquainted with the system of Schopenhauer. Though critics profess to see in the "Tristan und Isolde"—a work completed after he had studied Schopenhauer's philosophy—a dramatisation of that system, it is obvious, from the general tendency of the earlier dramas, that Wagner's own genius had led him to the same path which the great German sage had found before him, and that with him it was but the meeting with a fellow-traveller bound on the same journey.—ED.

They will constitute an attempt at a digest or abstract of that division of the book, and will be illustrated by numerous quotations from the work itself. In order, however, that a clear comprehension of the philosopher's views upon art be obtained, it will be necessary that his fundamental conception of the true and inner nature of the universe, which he asserts is the key to the knowledge of the inmost being of the whole of nature, receive early consideration. For the moment, however, the purport of this introduction is simply to furnish a preliminary statement, which may help to smooth the way towards a clearer understanding of a philosophy which demands from its students some courage, as well as inclination for mental abstraction and concentration.

The conflict between physics and philosophy, or, to speak more correctly, between science and transcendental metaphysics or ontology, has ever been a hard-fought one, but, with the death of every doughty champion upon each side, another hero arises who takes up the fallen weapons and renews the encounter. That admirably logical state of mind evinced by the typical scientist, which accepts as the sole definition of facts "that which is capable of demonstration," or, perhaps, to be more fair, "that which is capable of clear and definite mental perception," opposes itself to that other mental attitude which attempts to transcend the possibility of experience, "and thus," to use Schopenhauer's words, "to transcend nature, or the given phenomenal appearance of things, in order to give an explanation of that by which in some sense or other this experience, or nature, is conditioned; or, to speak in popular language, of that which is behind nature and makes it possible." Science deals with the world in its *concrete actuality*; metaphysics seeks to deal with it in its *abstract possibility*, and so must always be, more or less, speculative. With the close of the long list of verifiable facts which the man of science compiles, comes from him the remark, "Thus far does science bring us—thus far and no farther—it is not given to man to pass this line, or to apprehend things as they are in themselves ;

beyond this line is the province of the Unknowable, or the Vital and Eternal Energy from which all things proceed." This piling-up of facts, it is admitted, brings him no nearer the solution of the world's secret ; but, he asserts, this is all that is given to mankind to grasp. This is the Agnostic's view, and, as such, it is unassailable. But, on the other hand, there is a speculative element in the composition of most ardent, aspiring minds which demands satisfaction, or at least some exercise of its ever-active faculties ; and, while the arguments of science captivate our reason, they vouchsafe no response, however stammering, to those deep and longing cries of the spirit for a succour and a sustenance more permanent than matter can afford, which, ever and anon, find voice within us. Emerson has put the case well. "The physical philosophers,"* says he, "had sketched each his theory of the world ; the theory of atoms, of fire, of flux, of spirit ; theories mechanical and chemical in their genius. Plato, a master of mathematics, studious of all natural laws and causes, feels these, as second causes, to be no theories of the world, but bare inventories and lists." From this insufficiency on the part of science and the need thereby originated, spring all the religions of the world, those most significant and important of the productions of metaphysics ; from this need, too, arises philosophical inquiry, which, from the early primitive wisdom of the Orientals down to modern speculation, has formed so powerful a constituent in the higher education of humanity.

The essential difference between physics (understood in the wide sense of the ancients) and metaphysics has been defined by Schopenhauer in a beautiful and lucid passage† which, although rather lengthy, I propose to quote *in extenso* :—

"With naturalism, then, or the purely physical way of looking at things, we shall never attain our end ; it is like a sum that never comes out. Causal series without beginning or end, fundamental forces which are inscrutable, endless space, beginningless time, infinite divisibility of matter, and all this further conditioned

* *Vide* the Essay, "Plato, or the Philosopher."

† Vol. ii. pp. 382-4 (Haldane and Kemp's translation).

by a knowing brain, in which alone it exists just like a dream, and without which it vanishes, constitute the labyrinth in which naturalism leads us ceaselessly round. The height to which in our time the natural sciences have risen in this respect entirely throws into the shade all previous centuries, and is a summit which mankind reaches for the first time. But, however great are the advances which *physics* may make, not the smallest step towards *metaphysics* is thereby taken, just as a plane can never obtain cubical content by being indefinitely extended. For all such advances will only perfect our knowledge of the *phenomenon*; while *metaphysics* strives to pass beyond the phenomenal appearance itself to that which so appears.* And if, indeed, it had the assistance of an entire and complete experience, it would, as regards the main point, be in no way advantaged by it. Nay, even if one wandered through all the planets and fixed stars, one would thereby have made no step in *metaphysics*. It is rather the case that the greatest advances of physics will make the need of metaphysics ever more felt; for it is just the corrected, extended, and more thorough knowledge of nature which, on the one hand, always undermines and ultimately overthrows the metaphysical assumptions which till then have prevailed, but, on the other hand, presents the problem of metaphysics itself more distinctly, more correctly, and more fully, and separates it more clearly from all that is merely physical; moreover, the more perfectly and accurately known nature of the particular thing more pressingly demands the explanation of the whole and the general, which, the more correctly, thoroughly, and completely it is known empirically, only presents itself as the more mysterious. Certainly the individual, simple investigator of nature, in a special branch of physics, does not at once become clearly conscious of all this; he rather sleeps contentedly by the side of his chosen maid, in the house of Odysseus, banishing all thoughts of Penelope (cf. ch. 12, at the end). Hence we see at the present day the *husk of Nature*

* The *noumenon*—the One Reality which underlies, and is the cause of, the appearances.—ED.

investigated in its minutest details, the intestines of intestinal worms, and the vermin of vermin, known to a nicety. But if some one comes, as, for example, I do, and speaks of the *kernel of Nature*, they will not listen; they even think it has nothing to do with the matter, and go on sifting their husks. One finds oneself tempted to call that over-microscopical and micrological investigator of Nature the cotquean of Nature. But those persons who believe that crucibles and retorts are the true and only source of all wisdom are, in their own way, just as perverse as were formerly their antipodes, the scholastics. As the latter, absolutely confined to their abstract conceptions, used these as their weapons, neither knowing nor investigating anything outside them, so the former, absolutely confined to their empiricism, allow nothing to be true except what their eyes behold, and believe they can thus arrive at the ultimate ground of things,* not discerning that between the phenomenon and that which manifests itself in it, *the thing in itself*,† there is a deep gulf, a radical difference, which can only be cleared up by the knowledge and accurate delimitation of the subjective element of the phenomenon, and the insight that the ultimate and most important conclusions concerning the nature of things can only be drawn from self-consciousness; yet without all this one cannot advance a step beyond what is directly given to the senses; thus can get no further than *to* the problem. Yet, on the other hand, it is to be observed that the most perfect possible knowledge of Nature is the corrected *statement of the problem* of metaphysics. Therefore no one ought to venture upon this without having first acquired a

* Schopenhauer is hardly fair here to scientific men, who seldom, if ever, take up such a position. It is true that they refuse to admit anything as a fact which is incapable of demonstration, or of which they are unable to form a definite mental picture; but only *materialists*, not *truly scientific men*, believe that a study of such facts will enable them to "arrive at the ultimate ground of things." This, on the contrary, the latter affirm belongs to the province of the unknown, which may, or may not, become the known after death, but upon which they say it is useless in this life to speculate.—C. D.

† Kant's "Ding an sich."—C. D.

knowledge of all the branches of natural science, which, though general, shall be thorough, clear, and connected.

"For the problem must precede its solution. Then, however, the investigator must turn his glance inward; for the intellectual and ethical phenomena are more important than the physical, in the same proportion as, for example, animal magnetism is a far more important phenomenon than mineral magnetism. The last fundamental secret man carries within himself, and this is accessible to him in the most immediate manner; therefore it is only here that he can hope to find the key to the riddle of the world and gain a clue to the nature of all things. The special province of metaphysics thus certainly lies in what has been called mental philosophy."

"The ranks of living creatures thou dost lead
Before me, teaching me to know my brothers
In air and water and the silent wood:

* * * * *

Then to the cave secure thou leadest me,
Then show'st me mine own self, and in my breast
The deep mysterious miracles unfold."*

Schopenhauer occupies the almost unique position in the history of philosophy of a metaphysician who has prefaced his speculative inquiries as to the nature of being by a long-protracted and intense study, both theoretical and practical, of Science. "*Il n'est pas un philosophe comme les autres; il est un philosophe qui a vu le monde*" was once said of him. This is true. He speaks not of cut-and-dried formulæ as does many another philosopher; he has not only seen the world, but has listened to its heart-beats, and wept bitter and irrepressible tears of sympathy over its sufferings and wrongs. With all the pessimism of his conclusions, the extraordinary vitality and breadth of his humanity is a feature seldom encountered in systems of philosophy. As we read his suggestive words and indulge the reflections which they evoke, we are conscious of æsthetic and emotional influences

* Bayard Taylor's translation of "*Faust*," vol. i. 180.

which do not make themselves felt in other works of similar aim. His book is a book from which moral help may be derived—a book which not only embodies the feelings of a passionate, gifted, and thoughtful man, but which translates into speech the most universal, sacred, and interior motions of the spirit. The words themselves appear to be merely an efflorescence; far beneath dwells the unfathomable source whence he derives his ideas. His philosophy not only takes a cosmic range, it assumes a cosmic shape or whole; it is an organic representation of the universe such as a great artist might conceive. But it is not a complete system, without flaw. It is coloured by the strong bias of a forceful subjectivity. Its arguments cannot silence all our misgivings; even the most perfect philosophy will always contain an unexplained element like an insoluble deposit. But with all its blemishes, and whatever may be the ultimate fate in store for it, Schopenhauer's philosophy constitutes one of the most intrepid, luminous, and successful attempts ever made by mortal to lift the veil from the face of Divine Truth.

CHARLES DOWDESWELL.

(To be continued.)

Arthur Schopenhauer was born February 22, 1788; his centenary, therefore, occurs this month.

IN MEMORIAM: R. WAGNER.

FEBRUARY 13, 1883.

IMMORTAL MASTER! earthward wing thy flight;
 There look upon that loyal band of men,
 Bound in firm brotherhood, who, through the Night
 Of ignorance, have toiled with tireless pen.
 Endow their labours with undying Light;
 The world shall wake to crown thee "Meister" then!

HENRY KNIGHT.

ON the evening of Tuesday, November 29th, 1887, at the third London Symphony Concert of the second season, was produced, under the bâton of Mr. Henschel, and for the first time in England, the Meister's Juvenile Symphony in C. An excellent preliminary notice, in the form of an exhaustive analysis of the work, had appeared some time before in the *Daily Telegraph*; yet, when the evening came, St. James's Hall was half empty.

In "*La Musique, Ancienne et Moderne*," a work published in 1854, M. Scudo thus expresses himself:—"Mr. Wagner was born discontented. Discontented with Society, with men, and with art in the forms developed by the united efforts of great epochs and great creative minds." Had it been given poor Scudo to hear the master's Juvenile Symphony, he would assuredly have spared us this one at least of the many errors propagated by "our friend the enemy;" for by far the most obvious feature of the work is its author's determination to follow rather than to lead. Orthodox form is strictly adhered to, and Mozart and Beethoven are the models kept in view. Of the heart-subduing tenderness, the passion, the sublimity which abound in the master's later works, there is, naturally, little trace; and only now and then (as in the Introduction and the Andante) do we discern characteristic touches enabling us to identify the composer of the "Ring." Yet the resistless energy, the vast ambition, the strength and confidence of the man, stand confessed in almost every bar. The elements of individuality are there, but lack as yet a language of their own. They wear the forms they move in, however, not as though cribb'd, cabin'd, and confined by them, but as if, on the contrary, glorying in their newly-acquired power to dance in fetters. For even without access to a score, the youthful hero's mastery of all that concerns the *technique* of his art was sufficiently evident. His own words, moreover, may be quoted:—"It was the progress made by me in this (the contrapuntal) sense that astonished the excellent Röchlitz when he found out that the author of the symphony was a young man of nineteen." E. F. J.

The symphony here referred to is perhaps the most remarkable work, in one sense, that Richard Wagner ever produced; for it shows how early the enormous power of the man was manifested. Two or three years more employed in such preliminary trials of that power would, we unhesitatingly say, have resulted in the production of a symphony such as Beethoven himself would not have been ashamed, even in his maturity, to have set his name to. There is no servile copying of his great model; the form may be the form of Beethoven, but how often has that form been tried by other men—and with what results? They have merely clothed themselves with the skin of the dead lion. With Wagner we have more than the form, for in the andante and the scherzo we have the true Beethovenian spirit struggling to express itself by means of words as yet only half-learned. It is as though the spirit of some great artist—aye, of Beethoven, and none other—had descended for awhile, and had found the body selected by it for a temporary sojourning-place as yet untutored to its will.

What the world has lost by the carelessness of Mendelssohn in not returning to the young Wagner his manuscript, can never now be known. A little recognition would have nerved the young man to a fresh encounter with the giant forces of symphonic form; a few words of friendly counsel might have led him to a more thorough mastery of its organisation. But the "cold shoulder" has blighted many a budding genius, and appears to have deterred Richard Wagner from venturing again to expose himself to the rebuff of neglect.

We hear certain rumours that there is a clause in the will of Richard Wagner, wherein he desired that this symphony should be destroyed at a date which is now but a few months distant. We cannot vouch for the story; but trust sincerely that it may not be true. Beyond the interest always attaching to the early works of great men, there is too much intrinsic merit in this symphony for it to be wiped from out the pages of musical history. We should like to hear it, at least once, given under the energetic bâton

of Herr Hans Richter, for we think that some amount of fire and life might well be lent it, even though it were so soon to die.

The London branch of the Wagner Society held its annual General Meeting on Tuesday, January 25, 1888, at Trinity College, London. The hon. secs. reported that the numbers of the branch had largely increased during the past year, and that substantial assistance had been given by the branch to the Central Society in Germany in the work of ensuring the continuance of the Wagner performances at Bayreuth. Besides the formal business, it was resolved that the London branch give a Grand Orchestral Concert during the coming autumn, provided a sufficient guarantee be raised. As it is intended at this concert to present some of the less known portions of Wagner's music in a manner worthy of the master, we hope that the members of the Society will do their utmost to raise amongst themselves and their friends the required guarantee-fund of £400. Each member of the branch whose subscription is received before the end of next April will have the right to one free seat should the concert take place.

Mr. CARL ARMERUSTER is busily engaged in a Wagner crusade, and carrying the banner all over the country. In October, 1887, he was lecturing at Lewisham on the Musical Dramas of the Meister; in November, at Bournemouth; from October to December, at King's College, London; on February 7, 1888, at Harborne (Stafford); and on February 8, at Walsall. He is also about to deliver a course of six lectures on Wagner's later works at the Royal Institution, April 14 to May 19. The friends of the Meister should be deeply indebted to so staunch and capable a champion. In most of these lecture-recitals, the lecturer has himself played the pianoforte illustrations, while Miss Pauline Cramer has sung. Those of our readers who have been to Bayreuth will remember well the impressive effect produced by the reverend mien of the "bearer of the Gral;" and it says much for the artistic instincts of this lady that, gifted as she is with a voice and delivery that should soon place

her among the first ranks of Wagner singers, she should yet have consented to sink her individuality in a part to which no music is assigned.

On Tuesday, February 7, the programme of the London Symphony Concerts was chiefly filled with works by Richard Wagner, in commemoration of his death on February 13, 1883. Mr. Henschel has not yet quite mastered his subject; the broad grasp is wanting, though in the *Kaisersmarsch* promise of better things was offered. A little more fire, and the warmth will attract larger audiences.

We hear from Bayreuth that the dates of the performances for 1888 are from July 22 to August 19, and that they will take place on Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, and Thursday of each week; the Sundays and Wednesdays being devoted to *Parsifal*, and the Mondays and Thursdays to the *Meistersinger*. This arrangement will allow those who have only two days to spare at Bayreuth to hear both works, and will enable such (the majority, as we hope) as can make a longer stay, to get away from the little town for a couple of days in the picturesque Bavarian highlands, which are within an hour or two's railway journey from Bayreuth, or to spend their time in exploring the romantic old city of Nuremberg.

Herr Levy will conduct *Parsifal*, and Herr Mottl the *Meistersinger*. Among other arrangements, Mesdames Materna, Malten, and Sucher, and Herren Gudehus and Winckelmann will sing. We have not as yet been able to gather whether Reichmann or Scheidemantel, or both, will play the part of Amfortas, but trust that each of these exceptionally-gifted artists will take part in the *Bühnenfestspiel*. The "bells," which had not hitherto given thorough satisfaction, will be represented by a new musical instrument made in Coventry, and over the production of which Herr C. Armbruster has watched. It is formed of metal tubes, and, though an octave higher in pitch than the original, it has the advantage of perfect truth of tone; we believe, however, that the old "bells" will be combined with the new, and thus the bass effect will be preserved, while the resonance of the new instrument will mask the defective tone of the old,

and gain by the *bourdon* vibration of the latter.

Those who purpose journeying to Bayreuth should apply at once to Herr Commerzienrath Adolf Gross, Bayreuth, Bavaria, for seats; price, 20s. Further details we hope to supply in our next number.

A *cyclus* of the *Ring* has just been given at Carlsruhe with great success. Memorial performances are being presented at Leipzig and Prag this month. In the summer Munich will offer the visitors to its exhibition similar representations.

We have received for review the *Bayreuther Taschen - Kalendar* (Almanack), price 1s. 6d. (to be obtained of the Hon. Sec. Wagner Society, Mr. Julius Cyriax, 33, Douglas Road, N.), and are pleased to see that it maintains so high a standard of literary merit. Almost, if not quite, all the facts bearing upon Wagner performances and publications in Europe are therein collected and tabulated; and we learn by it that, in 44 German-speaking towns, 641 performances of Wagner's dramas were given during the year 1887, Leipzig heading the list with 57, followed by Dresden with 53, Berlin with 42, and Munich and Hamburg each with 35. *Lohengrin* was performed 157 times, *Tannhäuser* 131, *Walküre* 103, the *Holländer* 86, *Siegfried* 37, *Rienzi* 35, *Rheingold* 31, *Meistersinger* 26, *Götterdämmerung* 21, and *Tristan* 14.

The calendar contains several remarkable articles, amongst which an "Introduction to the Philosophy of Arthur Schopenhauer" is the *pièce de résistance*.

We have also received A. Jullien's "Richard Wagner, sa Vie et ses Œuvres," and C. F. Glasenapp's "Richard Wagner's Leben und Wirken"; but cannot in this issue devote the attention to them which they deserve.

CORRESPONDENCE.

To the Editor of the MEISTER.

SIR,—The lull in the Wagner controversy in this country, and the warmth with which orchestral arrangements of the Master's works are received in the concert-room, although they may be considered as a very satisfactory indication of public feeling, cannot, I think, be construed as a sign that the victory is won. Indeed, it seems probable that when we again have the opportunity of hearing on the stage such masterpieces as *Tristan und Isolde*, and the *Meistersinger*, adverse critics (whose *bona-fides* cannot, of course, be called in question), will renew the attack, and will be followed by many who do not *like* the later manifestations of Wagner's genius chiefly because they do not *understand* them.

The fact is that the many-sided genius of Richard Wagner, delightful as it is in all its aspects, is not of the superficial kind which appeals at once to an uninitiated public. Characterised by seriousness of purpose, subtlety of thought, and great elevation of musical idea, it requires a considerable familiarity with the Master's artistic aims and theories, and with his music Dramas—in a word, with the *new art* in its various parts and as a whole—before anything like a just appreciation of his position can be attained. Nothing in connexion with the subject is more noticeable than the want of knowledge upon such points which in general obtains, even amongst musicians, and it cannot but be that anything which tends to the diffusion of information respecting Wagner's art-work will tend also to that "consummation devoutly to be wished"—a widespread understanding of the Master, which may end in the formation of a public opinion sufficient to support adequate and frequent representations of those wonderful creations of his heart and brain, the Music-Dramas.

Wishing the new venture a very prosperous career,

I am, Sir,
Faithfully yours,
JOHN MAKEHAM.

THE WAGNER SOCIETY.



THE parent WAGNER SOCIETY was founded in 1883—the year of the master's death—with a view to unite his adherents into one body for effective action. Its main object is to ensure the periodical representation of his masterpieces in the theatre built by himself at Bayreuth, which offers unique advantages for the complete realisation of his musical and dramatic ideals.

The Society has already 244 branches and agencies in Europe and America, with a total of upwards of 6,000 members.

The LONDON BRANCH was founded in 1884, to serve as a rallying-point for the admirers of Richard Wagner resident in England who are desirous of furthering, by active measures, the study of his Music-Dramas, his æsthetic and philosophical works, and the dissemination of the art principles which he held and taught. With this object in view, the Committee organises Concerts, Conversaciones, Lectures, Readings, &c., which the members of the London branch are entitled to attend without further payment beyond their subscriptions.

Among the arrangements for the forthcoming season, it is proposed to give a Wagner Orchestral Concert on a large scale, under the bâton of one of the first conductors of the day. A guarantee (already partly subscribed) of £400 is required for this purpose, in order that the concert may rank in the highest class for execution.

A certain number of free tickets for the Bayreuth performances will be distributed amongst members who apply for them.

A subscription of 10s., payable annually on January 1, constitutes membership. Of this, the sum of 4s. is transmitted to Munich for the furtherance of the work of the parent Society.

All applications for membership to be addressed to Julius Cyriax, Esq., 33, Douglas-road, N., or Charles Dowdeswell, Esq., Brantwood, Macaulay-road, Clapham Common, S.W., Hon. Secs.